

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor Sam Brownback and Water Vision Team focus on implementation  
*Inaugural “Water Legacy Award” presented***

**Manhattan, Kan.** – Governor Sam Brownback told more than 600 attendees at the Governor’s Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas that now is the time to take action to implement the *Long Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*.

The Governor, along with Kansas Water Office Director Tracy Streeter kicked off the meeting by presenting the first “Water Legacy Award” to Wayne Bossert, former Groundwater Management District #4 Manager. The award recognized Bossert’s lifetime commitment and his legacy in extending implementing the objectives in the *Kansas Water Plan*, to preserving water in Kansas. Bossert also led efforts to develop the Local Enhancement Management Area (LEMA) program. The Sheridan County #6 LEMA stakeholders kept local control on defining the conservation measures for their area and was the first local group to adopt a nearly 20 percent reduction in historical water use to extend the useable life of the aquifer, to benefit their future and future generations.

“After hundreds of meetings and discussions, it is time to implement the action items found in the *Long-Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*,” said Governor Brownback . “One of our biggest challenges will be to connect all Kansans to water so they may understand the critical importance of this resource. People must use water efficiently and effectively to extend the life of our aquifers and reservoirs across the state.”

The two-day conference focuses on moving the water vision forward to meet current and future water supply needs for Kansas.

“Each year the attendance at this conference is indicative of the concern Kansans have regarding our water resources,” said Tracy Streeter, Kansas Water Office Director. “When we faced the historic droughts in 2011 and 2012, many of the unknowns became clearer. No matter where they live, must be concerned with our water supply issues. We continue to ask ourselves how can we help change habits going forward that encourage conservation and best-practices from all sectors – agriculture, municipalities, industry, and even the individual household?”

Regional planning areas were established to address the priorities shared by Kansans. Attendees at the conference heard the guiding principles for implementing the Vision and for establishing the regional goals.

“Leadership at the local level is most critical for the success of this Vision and the priority goals that have been established for each region,” said Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey. “We all have the responsibility to do what we can to ensure Kansas’ future.”

The rest of the day continued with Dr. Stacy Nelson, with the “Influencer –The New Science of Leading Change”, Tristan Surtees and Charles Blanc, with Watershed+Project Implementation & Development and Dominic Jones, Manager of Red Rock Rural Water System in Minnesota.

Tomorrow will build on the Vision implementation and water policy discussions from the previous day with technical presentation posters and talks. Graduate and undergraduate students will present their research. Rex Buchanan, Kansas Geological Survey Interim Director will present *Reflections on Water and Education*.

For a complete list of the conference’s speakers and topics and to view the second draft of the Vision, visit: [www.kwo.org](http://www.kwo.org)

The Governor’s Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas is co-sponsored by the Kansas Water Office (KWO) and K-State /Kansas Water Resources Institute. Sponsors for the event come from multiple diverse water interests. Major sponsors for the event include Black & Veatch, Burns and McDonnell and Select Energy.

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